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Commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/19 entitled "Commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade". It focuses on the initiatives undertaken by States to implement paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance aimed at countering the legacy of slavery and contributing to the restoration of the dignity of the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

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I. Introduction

By its resolution 61/19, the General Assembly decided to designate 25 March 2007 as the International Day for the Commemoration of the Two-hundredth Anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The Assembly also urged Member States that had not already done so to develop educational programmes, including through school curricula, designed to educate and inculcate in future generations an understanding of the lessons, history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-second session a special report on initiatives taken by States to implement paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance aimed at countering the legacy of slavery and contributing to the restoration of the dignity of the victims of slavery and the slave trade. The present report contains the responses received from Member States to the note verbale sent by the Secretariat on this matter.

II. Information and comments received from Member States

Belarus

[Original: English]

1. Belarus believes that the two-hundredth anniversary is an occasion to honour the memory of those who died as a result of slavery and slavery-related practices, and to acknowledge that the legacy of slavery — human trafficking and other contemporary forms of slavery, racism, xenophobia and bigotry — continue to affect people of different racial descent on all continents.

2. Regrettably, the demand for contemporary slaves, ineffective prosecution of criminals and inadequate protection of labour rights also contribute to the growth of modern day slavery.

3. Because of the failure of the international community to alleviate poverty, eliminate demand for modern day slaves, defend human rights of all and address impunity effectively, potential victims are unable to protect themselves against exploitation and abuse.

4. Today slavery is usually based on economic inequity, poverty, and the growing gap between developed and developing countries. Often legislation of receiving countries does not provide sufficient protection for migrants. Belarus believes that victims of modern forms of slavery should not be subjected to prosecution, fines or any other penalties, regardless of their immigration status.

5. Belarus strongly supports the consolidation of efforts of the international community to eliminate human trafficking and other modern forms of slavery. It also takes all possible steps to contribute to international cooperation in this area.

6. Belarus was the first country in the post-Soviet area to launch a large-scale fight against human trafficking. Progressive legislation has been developed in Belarus in the area of fighting human trafficking. First of all, criminal responsibility has been aggravated and the list of criminal acts related to illegal slave trade has

been expanded. The status of victims was established by law and the measures for their protection have been taken.

7. Belarus, like some other countries, has created an efficient national coordination mechanism under its Ministry of the Interior for revealing and blocking human trafficking channels, punishing instigators of these crimes, and rehabilitating slave trade victims.

8. Belarus is keen to propose the creation of such a coordination mechanism at the international level under the auspices of the United Nations. It was one of the initiators of General Assembly resolution 61/180, which established the inter-agency coordination group and invited Member States to consider the elaboration of a United Nations plan of action against slavery and trafficking in persons.

9. Belarus, together with the Philippines, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Vital Voices Global Partnership, organized on 5 March 2007, at United Nations Headquarters, an international conference on trafficking in women and girls. The conference embodied the continuation of the process that emanated from the consensus in the General Assembly on two important resolutions. Resolution 61/144, entitled "Trafficking in women and girls", stresses the important role of a strong gender approach in combating this crime. Resolution 61/180, entitled "Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons", underscores the need to foster a global partnership against trafficking in persons, invites Member States to consider the advisability of a United Nations strategy or plan of action on combating trafficking in persons and establishes an inter-agency coordination group on trafficking in persons.

10. Belarus considers the elimination of the contemporary forms of slavery as a matter of priority for the international community.

Brazil

[Original: English]

11. With reference to General Assembly resolution 61/19, the Government of Brazil would like to provide the following information on the implementation of paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration:

- The 1988 Constitution represented a legal milestone in the consolidation of democracy in Brazil, translated into the prevalence of human rights, the self-determination of peoples, the repudiation of racism and terrorism, and cooperation among peoples for the benefit of humankind (set forth in sections II, III, VIII, and IX of article IV of the aforementioned Constitution).
- Brazil has concentrated efforts in strengthening and deepening policies aimed at promoting the values related to equality of opportunities, both from a formal and a material standpoint, to the appreciation of diversity in all spheres of social life, and to the promotion of Afro-Brazilian culture, aesthetics and religious traditions. These measures are consistent with the forms of reparations prescribed by the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, as follows:

  (a) Reparations through restitution: the affirmative action policies implemented by the Federal Government in various areas, particularly in the

labour market and education, have the clear objective of establishing a situation free of discriminatory practices against the Afro-descendant population. The affirmative actions aim at widening that population's access to means of social ascension, as well as to the political and economic prestige required for its effective integration into society;

(b) Reparations through rehabilitation: the Special Secretariat for the Promotion of Policies of Racial Equality (SEPPIR) was established (March 2003) as part of the executive branch and as a catalyst for policies aimed specifically at the needs of the Afro-descendant population. Accordingly, the various ministries and federal public administration agencies began to adapt their own policies so as to provide a series of services specifically designed for this formerly ignored segment of the population. Another important aspect has been the promotion of Afro-Brazilian culture and religious traditions; the latter, previously criminalized, are now the object of clear-cut policies aimed at their preservation and social acceptance. Similarly, the special attention being paid to the traditional Afro-Brazilian communities (*Quilombola* communities), for which a specific programme has been included in the 2004-2007 Pluriannual Plan, has helped to restore their dignity and improve their living conditions. This set of measures, whose listing is not exhaustive, may rightly be seen as part of a policy aimed at rehabilitating the historical victims of racial discrimination;

(c) Satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition: the Brazilian State has made much progress in the adoption of satisfaction measures and in the pursuit of guarantees of non-repetition. The two last Brazilian Presidents issued public statements recognizing not only the existence of racism and racial discrimination in the country, but also the State's responsibility to implement public policies in this regard. The Brazilian judiciary has also reiterated in numerous decisions the validity and the constitutionality of affirmative action policies, making explicit reference on several occasions to the losses sustained by the Afro-descendant population owing to discrimination. The subject of ethnic-racial relations and the history of Afro-Brazilian and African culture is already being incorporated into school syllabuses. Lastly, mechanisms are being reinforced to deter manifestations of racial discrimination through the media, businesses, and public and private service providing units. All this can be considered part of a reparations policy aimed at Afro-Brazilians for historically incurred injustices.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

1. Cuba attaches great importance to efforts by the United Nations system to combat racism and xenophobia and, in particular, to the actions decided at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban in August 2001, with a view to focusing the necessary attention on the needs of the victims of slavery and the slave trade and their descendants, of indigenous peoples subjected to servitude and of the victims of colonialism.

2. Cuba has been profoundly affected by one of the most sordid episodes in contemporary history: the transatlantic trade of African slaves. During the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, approximately 1.3 million Africans were forcibly transported to Cuba to work as slaves on plantations and in services of various kinds.

3. During the Spanish colonial period in Cuba, both Africans and their descendants suffered from the scourges of racism and discrimination, a complete denial of rights and marginalization, even after slavery was prohibited in the second half of the 1880s. This situation persisted without any fundamental change into the first half of the twentieth century under the wing of the models imposed by the neo-colonialist Power, the United States of America.

4. The triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 gave birth to a profound and continuous process of political and socio-economic transformation deeply rooted in anti-racism and liberation, aimed at paving the way for the full enjoyment of equality, social justice and greater popular participation by all Cubans without any difference on grounds of skin colour. This process has been protected by law through the creation of a constitutional and legal framework that guarantees the full equality of all citizens.

5. In Cuba, implementation of the Durban outcome is part of a process — initiated long before the Conference — of improving and developing the policies and programmes that have been applied since 1959.

6. The Cuban State has developed programmes aimed at strengthening equity, equality and justice for all citizens. Others have been specially designed to promote social integration and capacity-building in historically disadvantaged sectors of the population. Deep principles and convictions on human and international solidarity have been instilled in the Cuban people.

7. The Cuban nation and culture are the product of the intermingling of different ethnic and cultural groups from Africa, Asia and Europe. The Cuban people proudly proclaim their origins. Accordingly, and as a tribute to those who hail from these parts of the world and have kept their customs and traditions alive, various cultural festivals are periodically celebrated in Cuba. These include the:

- Chinese Abroad Festival
- Caribbean Festival in Cuba, also known as "The Festival of Fire"
- African Cultural Festival
- Africa Fiesta
- Conference on the African Diaspora in the Caribbean
- International Workshop on African Culture in the Caribbean, highlighting the problems and perspectives of African descendants today
- Arbour Day Festival, a time for preserving the deepest values that make up our identity
- International Congress on Culture and Development, a major event whose agenda includes, inter alia, the preservation of national identities in the face of hegemony and its tribulations.

8. In Cuba, there is a broad network of institutions and organizations that carry out activities to promote, save and preserve the identities, values and history of the ethnic and cultural groups that gave rise to the Cuban nation; the work of some of these institutions and organizations has been internationally recognized. They include the Fundación Fernando Ortiz, the Centre for African and Middle Eastern Studies and the Africa House/Museum, which, for decades, have been promoting awareness of a vital component of Cuba's cultural roots.

9. Cuba, although subjected to an ironclad embargo, is building a society that is just and equitable for all. Cuban institutions have eradicated racism and discrimination in all their forms and manifestations, including those based on gender, creed or economic, physical or mental condition. All Cubans without exception, whether they are African, Asian or European descendants, women or disabled persons, enjoy the same rights without any discrimination whatsoever.

10. Thus, for example, the State-run national health and education systems guarantee universal access, free of charge, to all citizens on an equal basis, without distinction as to skin colour.

11. As for related forms of discrimination, Cuban laws, regulations and other measures provide a guarantee that persons affected by HIV are not subjected to any form of discrimination and can enjoy the same rights as any other citizen, including medical treatment free of charge (including antiretroviral treatment), a free education, social security, employment and participation in all activities that their physical and intellectual condition permit.

12. The right of all Cubans to practice sports is recognized and protected by the Constitution. The National Institute for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (INDER) was established in 1961. The Institute promotes the healthy and vigorous practice of athletic and recreational activities on a large scale. Sports as a right for all is one of the most outstanding achievements of the Cuban Revolution in the field of human rights.

13. Despite these major achievements, the Cuban Revolution, subject to an embargo and harassment by the most powerful and aggressive empire ever to exist, has not been able to fully achieve its goal of eradicating the legacy of centuries of injustice and discrimination against Cuban Afro-descendants. Rising above the obstacles and restrictions imposed by the economic, commercial and financial war waged by the United States authorities against the Cuban people, Cuba is pursuing many social programmes for lower-income persons, among whom Afro-descendants still figure disproportionately.

14. Cuba's commitment to combating discrimination is clearly reflected in its signature and ratification of a number of international instruments, including the:

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- 1953 Protocol amending the Slavery Convention signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926
- Amended 1926 Slavery Convention
- Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery

- Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

15. Cuba's struggle against racism has transcended its own borders. The blood of many of our sons has been spilled in the struggles against colonialism and apartheid in our brother continent, Africa. The elimination of such practices was a milestone in the international struggle against racial discrimination.

16. Underpinning the action of the Cuban people is an ethic of solidarity and cooperation with, and assistance to, the poorest and most deprived countries of all continents, particularly Africa. Cuban assistance has spanned the areas of, inter alia, health, education and sports.

17. Since 1961, Cuba has cooperated with 154 countries in the world. A total of 270,743 civil-society partners have provided services through its cooperation programmes, particularly in the areas of health and education.

18. Cuba has made tremendous efforts to train foreign students, both in our country and in other countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, where it has even established Medical Schools. The origins of such cooperation go back to 1975 with the inauguration of the first Medical School in Aden. Recently, other centres of higher learning have been opened in Venezuela, Timor-Leste, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Equatorial Guinea and Eritrea. These medical schools bolster the integral health programme being conducted in various countries.

19. Cuba wishes to express its concern over the situation that persists in many of the regions and countries in the world, particularly in the industrialized North, where racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia have taken new and sophisticated forms. In these places, associations and political parties with a platform of racism, social exclusion and the marginalization of peoples, ethnic groups, minorities or other categories of social groups and individuals continue to be established. Discriminatory immigration laws and policies and anti-terrorist laws that provide ample latitude for arbitrariness and the exercise of government authority on discriminatory, racist and xenophobic grounds are on the rise.

20. Cuba will continue to call for the declaration of slavery and the transatlantic trade of Africans as crimes against humanity, and for due reparation and compensation to be made to the descendants of the victims of such criminal practices, as well as the victims of colonialism and the genocidal exploitation of indigenous peoples — as an act of historical justice that remains to be taken.

Cyprus

[Original: English]

1. With reference to General Assembly resolution 61/19, Cyprus would like to provide the following information related to the implementation of that resolution.

National action plans and other schemes

2. Following the World Conference against Racism, held in Durban, in September 2001, the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, in collaboration with the

Law Commissioner and President of the National Organization for the Protection of Human Rights, the Attorney-General of the Republic, the Commissioner for Administration and all other key actors (ministries, governmental departments and NGOs) prepared in 2002 a national report on the implementation of the conclusions of the European and world conferences against racism. In chapter IV of the report, a national action plan against racism was drawn up, in which planned activities and/or measures (legislative or administrative) for the period 2002-2003 were included. Next to each activity/measure the responsible authority for its implementation was designated, as well as the timetable for its adoption. On 27 February 2002, the Council of Ministers adopted the report, together with the national action plan against racism and appointed a ministerial committee to closely monitor the action plan, with a view to assessing its impact and effectiveness. An ad hoc committee consisting of representatives from the Law Office, the Law Commissioner, the Commissioner for Administration and all interested parties (governmental and non-governmental) was also appointed to assist the work of the ministerial committee, on progress made on the implementation of the various measures/activities included in the plan.

Legislation

3. The legal system of Cyprus safeguards the provision of the necessary legal protection for persons claiming to be victims of any kind of discrimination and provides for effective remedies/recourses (administrative and judicial). The fundamental rights and liberties of the citizens and the remedies provided for their effective implementation are defined in the Constitution of Cyprus, which incorporates, and in some instances expands upon, the rights and liberties safeguarded by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. All these rights are safeguarded for all persons without distinction or differentiation between citizens and non-citizens of the Republic or between citizens of the Republic who belong to the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Communities and without distinction or differentiation on grounds of community, religion or nationality, or on other grounds.

4. Cyprus has ratified most European and United Nations conventions relating to discrimination. These include, for example, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Council of Europe Convention on Cyber Crime and its Additional Protocol on criminalization of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems.

Cyprus Equality Body

5. As a result of the enactment by the House of Representatives of the Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman) Law of 2004 (No. 42 (I)/04), the Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman) was appointed, in compliance with article 13 of racial directive No. 2000/43/EC, as the competent body (an independent authority) to deal with and decide upon discrimination matters in Cyprus. As a result, two separate Authorities were created, namely the Cyprus Anti-discrimination Body and the Equality Authority, which together comprise the Cyprus Equality Body. For the complete contribution of Cyprus, please see www.un.org/esa/coordination/Cyprus.pdf.

Denmark

[Original: English]

1. Denmark is deeply concerned with the legacy of slavery and the restoration of the dignity of the victims of slavery and the slave trade, and thus wholeheartedly supported the adoption of General Assembly resolution 61/19.

2. At the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001, the European Union was pleased to join international consensus in acknowledging that slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so.

3. On 25 March 2007, the day designated by the General Assembly as the International Day for the Commemoration of the Two-hundredth Anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the European Union issued a statement reiterating the position that the barbarism of transatlantic slave trade constitutes one of the darkest chapters of our history, in terms of its magnitude, its organized nature and particularly its negation of the human dignity of the victims.

4. The statement also underlined the commitment of the European Union member States to fight various forms of modern slavery, such as bonded labour and human trafficking.

5. In May 2007, Denmark pledged a contribution of $10,000 towards the proposed permanent memorial to the victims of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, which would be placed in the halls of the United Nations, an initiative led by member States of the Caribbean Community.

6. On 3 July 1848, slavery was abolished in the Danish West Indies (today the United States Virgin Islands). The Danish Government is currently considering an appropriate way to commemorate the 160-year anniversary in 2008, taking into account the sentiments of the descendants of the slaves living today in the United States Virgin Islands and Ghana, from where the majority of slaves originated.

7. It should also be mentioned that the Danish National Museum on 8 October 2007 will be opening the main building at the former slave-plantation "Frederiksgave" in Ghana to a public audience, following the renovation of the plantation. This project is part of the National Museum's ongoing research into the Danish slave trade and other activities related to the Danish colonies in Africa and the West Indies. The Danish Minister for Cultural Affairs will be participating in the opening. The renovated museum at "Frederiksgave" will provide audiences with information about the cultural background and history of the slave trade, including about the transatlantic slave trade and the use of slaves in the Danish colonies in the West Indies.

8. Furthermore, a total of 19 Danish schools under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Associated School Project will commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade on 23 August 2007, as part of the transatlantic slave trade education project.

Ghana

[Original: English]

1. With reference to General Assembly resolution 61/19, Ghana would like to provide the following information, related to the implementation of that resolution.

The national slave route project

2. The national slave route project is an ongoing project aimed at researching the transatlantic slave trade in Ghana. The national slave route project committee, under the leadership of the Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations, has since its inception held two conferences — national and international — as a way of researching the transatlantic slave trade, i.e., to tell this story from the African perspective.

3. The findings of both conferences are being published in a book to be disseminated to the public at large.

4. The national slave route project committee is currently embarking on strategies and programmes to infuse the history of the transatlantic slave trade into the basic, secondary and tertiary curricula as a way of educating the youth about the slave trade and its consequences. This is to inculcate in them a deep understanding of the history and the lessons and to teach them to resist all forms of slavery.

Emancipation Day 2007

5. The Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations, since 1998, has sought to honour the memory of those who died as a result of slavery through the celebration of Emancipation Day on 1 August every year. This is an outreach to the Africans in the diaspora.

6. The transatlantic slave trade resulted in the forced movement of men and women who were tragically uprooted and inhumanly transported from the motherland. They were extracted from their paths of development, separated from their kith and kin and transplanted to foreign lands under a system of slavery. Emancipation Day is celebrated beginning in the last week of July and climaxing on 1 August, the anniversary of the declaration of the emancipation of slaves. Celebrated annually in Ghana since 1998, Emancipation Day provides an opportunity to go back into history and find out more about one of human history's most cruel activity, whose effect has been with the world ever since and has been the subject of intense universal debates, especially in recent times. Through this celebration, Ghana tries to learn more about the slave trade, find out the roles of their ancestors in its perpetration, use it as a basis to better understand the brothers and sisters in the diaspora, and find out how to turn that tragedy into something more positive for the African continent, the black community universally and the world at large.

Joseph Project

7. On 1 August 2007, Ghana launched the Joseph Project. The Joseph Project is the code name for a series of activities, actions and interactions being spearheaded by Ghana to re-establish the African nation as a nation of all Africans, capable of delivering on the promise of God to Africa and the African people.

8. It is Ghana's invitation to the diasporans to make the return journey, to reconnect with the land of their ancestors and their brothers and sisters in the homeland.

9. The Joseph Project recognizes that, while it is miserably true that there are far too many Africans held down by the legacy of their chains, it is also true that there are many, such as the biblical Joseph, who have risen above their captivity and are shining examples of the best of the human spirit and of what man can achieve in every walk of life.

10. History is replete with names of Africans who rose not only above their chains, but also above those who sought to chain them.

11. Ghana was the first African colony south of the Sahara to gain its independence. The Black Star of Africa inspired and drew inspiration from the fight for the full emancipation of Africans worldwide, especially the civil rights struggle in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s. Ghana continues to fight for the full emancipation of all Africans everywhere.

Visit by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

12. In March 2007, the Ministry, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), organized a conference of West African Ministers of Tourism to mark the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

13. The conference was aiming at sensitizing the other West African countries on what Ghana was doing in order to plan together to reach out to the diaspora.

14. The Director-General of UNESCO and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom were present at the conference, and held a sod-cutting ceremony for the construction of a monument in memory of the end of the transatlantic slave trade, and called for moving forward.

Jamaica

[Original: English]

1. As a primordial site of slavery, it is estimated that Jamaica accounted for about 1 million of the approximately 15 million Africans forcibly removed from Africa between the fifteenth and the nineteenth century. Today's majority of the population of Jamaica comprise people of African decent. The abolition of the slave trade therefore marked a turning point in Jamaica's history, which is shaped by the cruel past of slavery.

2. Jamaica firmly supports the view expressed in General Assembly resolution 61/19 that the slave trade and slavery are among the worst violations of human rights in the history of humanity, and acknowledges that the slave trade and the legacy of slavery are at the heart of situations of profound social and economic inequality, hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice, which continue to affect peoples of African descent today.

3. Jamaica has had a historical role in the fight against racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance and is a strong advocate of the importance of the provision of effective remedies, recourse, redress and compensatory and other measures at all levels to address the injustices and continuing impact of slavery and the slave trade.

4. Paragraph 101 of the Durban Declaration noted that: "With a view to closing those dark chapters in history and as a means of reconciliation and healing, we invite the international community and its members to honour the memories of the victims of these tragedies. We further note that some have taken initiatives of regretting or expressing remorse or presenting apologies, and call on all those who have not yet contributed to restoring the dignity of the victims to find appropriate ways to do so ...".

5. In fulfilment of paragraph 101 of the Durban Declaration, which, inter alia, calls for honouring the memory of the victims, and in line with the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade, the Government of Jamaica established the Jamaica National Bicentenary Committee, which has a mandate to, inter alia:

- Plan appropriate and meaningful island-wide events to mark this important milestone in the history and experience of the nation
- Educate the nation about the process of abolition, from the perspective of the Caribbean
- Stress the implications of ending the trade to Africans and how it contributed to the creation of a Jamaican identity, an identity grounded in the African past
- Honour those like national hero, Marcus Garvey, who carried on the struggle for mental liberation from the legacies of slavery.

6. Activities throughout the year include public lectures, panel discussions, a special bicentenary conference and the generation of educational material in conjunction with local publishers and educational institutions. A special commemorative stamp was also launched.

7. On the United Nations designated International Day for the commemoration of the bicentenary on 25 March 2007, Jamaica joined other CARICOM member States in observing a minute of silence at 12 noon in honour of the victims.

8. The national commemorative event of the Day featured a symbolic ancestral funeral rites ceremony for the slaves who died during the Middle Passage or on plantations and were never accorded proper funeral rites.

9. On 27 March, Parliament recognized the bicentenary and paid special tribute to those who fought for abolition and the rights and freedoms of peoples of African decent across the world.

10. Jamaica, in partnership with CARICOM and other Member States, is pursuing an initiative to erect a permanent memorial in the halls of the United Nations, under the theme "Acknowledging the tragedy, considering the legacy, lest we forget". This would be a tangible, fitting monument to the memory of the victims of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery. It is also a unique opportunity for the international community to honour the memory of the victims at the symbolic United Nations building.

11. A voluntary fund, the Permanent Memorial Fund, has been opened under the custody of the Permanent Mission of Jamaica and, in addition to Member States that have already contributed, other interested parties are also invited to contribute to this project.

12. The Durban Declaration explicitly recognized the relationship between the oppressive structure and legacy of slave trade and slavery, and the current social and economic inequality that affects peoples of African descent. Paragraph 102 referred to "... the moral obligation on the part of all concerned States and call upon these States to take appropriate and effective measures to halt and reverse the lasting consequences of those practices".

13. To this end, on the occasion of the bicentenary the issue of reparation for slavery was the subject of a three-week long debate in the Jamaican Parliament, where there was consensus on the moral correctness of pursuing the claims against former colonial powers. A bipartisan committee was established to examine the issue in all its dimensions and advise on the efficacy of seeking restitution. The Jamaica National Bicentenary Committee is conducting research to possibly assist in arriving at reparation claims.

The Netherlands

[Original: English]

1. Since 1 July 2002, the Netherlands has celebrated the abolition of slavery with an annual national commemoration. A monument in Amsterdam was unveiled in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix. In the year 2003, the National Institute for Slavery History (NINSEE) was created and opened a website with educational and historical information on slavery and the slave trade (see www.ninsee.nl; Dutch only). Slavery is included in the national historical canon, meaning that all schoolchildren in the Netherlands learn about this tragic episode through the school curricula.

2. Besides the organization of the annual commemoration and the involvement in school curricula, one of the main tasks of NINSEE, the Institute that studies slavery and its aftermath, is thorough and comprehensive research into Dutch slavery history. Recently, a study was published on the abolition of slavery in Suriname. The study, carried out by the director of NINSEE, Mr. G. Willemsen, focuses on abolition day, 1 July 1865, and its impact.

Portugal

[Original: English]

1. Portugal is of the view that slave trade and slavery are among the most outrageous acts perpetuated against mankind. Portugal is also of the opinion that the horror of these crimes must be exhaustively described and analysed, namely in school books, at all the levels of the education system, particularly at the university level and at the level of day-to-day life, in order to ensure remembrance.

2. In this context, Portugal promotes actively at all levels knowledge of history and slavery throughout history. The education system of Portugal is proactive in the remembrance of slavery.

3. Remembrance is carried out daily by the High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME) (see www.acime.gov.pt) in the fight against racism and xenophobia. Since its inception in 1996, ACIME has published books on racism, promotes the annual contest on the theme "My school fighting discrimination", in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, a contest which was integrated into the events of the 2007 European Year for Equal Opportunities for All. It also launched the campaign "Portugal imigrante, Portugal tolerante", which was carried on television, in the press and outdoors.

4. ACIME, with the Portuguese Victims Support Association, established the Unit for support of immigrant victims or victims of racial or ethnic discrimination.

5. ACIME also held, on 17 and 18 November 2004, the seminar entitled "Citizenship and immigration"; ACIME also cooperated with the Foreigners and Borders Service in training courses for the police forces (the nomination of inspectors) within the framework of the discipline of human rights.

6. It created the television programme entitled "*Nós*" (Us), which is devoted to immigration and which began in January 2004. It cooperated in the formulation of the book entitled *Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities*, on behalf of the Consultative Council, for training of the security services and forces.

7. The book *What? Me? A racist?* of the European Commission was also published by ACIME, which contributed to the seminar in Lisbon and O Porto on the theme "Mediation as a way of solving conflicts", held in collaboration with the security forces.

8. Last but not least, the annual prize "Immigration and ethnic minorities — journalism for tolerance" was introduced by ACIME. All of this constitutes a strong framework for remembrance.

Sweden

[Original: English]

1. The Swedish Government is planning the following activity to commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

2. The Government is planning to commission the Delegation for Human Rights in Sweden to commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade during the fall of 2007. The formal decision was to be made by 19 July. The Delegation shall carry out activities in order to raise awareness and enhance knowledge of human dignity and equal rights. In implementing the task, the Delegation shall draw attention to modern issues related to human rights in Sweden such as racism, discrimination and trafficking of human beings, within a historical context. The activities shall be designed and carried out in close cooperation with organizations working for human rights or against racism and discrimination, especially with organizations for people of African origin in Sweden.

3. The Delegation for Human Rights in Sweden was established by the Government in March 2006 as a temporary national authority. Its mandate runs for four years. The Delegation has been appointed the national implementing body of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (EY07) and of the campaign entitled "All different, all equal", sponsored by the Council of Europe national campaign committee.

Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]

1. Among the main activities undertaken and being pursued by Trinidad and Tobago are the following:

- On 25 March 2007, messages by the Honourable Prime Minister and the Secretary-General of the United Nations were published in the three daily newspapers
- On 25 March 2007, an ecumenical service was hosted by the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs, followed by a reception at the Ministry
- A rally was held on 25 March 2007, at which local artists performed and the African heritage of Trinidad and Tobago was featured
- Interviews have been and continue to be arranged in the media, featuring personalities involved in the various activities of the national programme, as well as other prominent individuals
- The National Museum, a division of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, in collaboration with students of the Centre for Creative and Festival Arts of the University of the West Indies, staged a "Musedrama", which included dramatic presentations at the Museum based on the abolition story
- A photo exhibit comprising mini photographs on slavery and the slave trade will be featured at the National Library and its branches both in Trinidad and Tobago. This exhibit was launched at the National Library in Port of Spain on 25 July 2007 and is expected to run until September 2007
- A lecture and panel discussion series were launched in April, and events have been organized monthly between April and August 2007 featuring lecturers and panellists from Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean
- The National Museum launched an exhibition on the transatlantic slave trade featuring illustrative and interactive panels comprising both photos and artefacts
- An education packet will be developed by the Department of History of the University of the West Indies, on the impact of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade on Trinidad and Tobago
- A storytelling caravan was launched in July 2007, which will visit libraries in both Trinidad and Tobago. The target audience will be primary school students
- A calypso competition, in commemoration of the abolition of the slave trade, involving school-aged children was organized in July 2007

- The publication of a supplement on the slave trade, to be distributed by local newspapers
- A special viewing of the exhibition of Dr. Eric William's Memorial Collection at the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies
- A display on slavery at the museum in Tobago
- The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with UNESCO, will spearhead an essay writing competition for schools. This competition will be geared towards both primary and secondary school students
- A seminar for educators on the theme "Teaching transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans" is expected to be held in November 2007 in Port of Spain.

2. In addition, commemorative events were also undertaken and planned on the following national holidays:

- Spiritual Baptist Day on 30 March 2007
- Emancipation day on 1 August 2007.

United Kingdom

[Original: English]

1. Following are the activities that were undertaken in the United Kingdom.

A. Honouring the memory of the victims

National service of commemoration, Westminster Abbey, 27 March 2007

2. A national service to commemorate the abolition of the slave trade and to recognize the suffering of those who were enslaved was held at Westminster Abbey on 27 March 2007. Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh attended with senior members of Government and Parliament, members of the diplomatic corps, invited members of faith organizations from across the country, community representatives and schoolchildren.

National memorial day

3. In 2007, the United Kingdom is holding commemorative activities to remember the victims of slavery past and present on both 25 March and 23 August. However, the United Kingdom wishes to ensure that the achievements of 2007 are built upon in future years. The United Kingdom is currently exploring the possibility of instituting an annual national memorial day for the remembrance of the transatlantic slave trade and its abolition.

4. The United Kingdom warmly welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 61/19 and was pleased to co-sponsor it. The resolution called for a special commemorative meeting to be held by the United Nations in New York on 26 March to mark the occasion. The United Kingdom worked closely with the Caribbean Group and others at the United Nations in preparing a series of events to suitably reflect the historical importance of the day, including a reception that was co-hosted by the Permanent Representatives of the CARICOM countries and the United Kingdom to the United Nations in New York.

Stamps and coins

5. The Government is very pleased that the Royal Mail and Royal Mint produced, respectively, stamps and coins to commemorate the 2007 bicentenary. These are important visible signs of the contribution of people from African and Caribbean backgrounds to the abolition of the slave trade and in the creation of a modern and successful country.

Physical memorials to the victims of the slave trade

6. There are numerous statues and memorials to British abolitionists, including Wilberforce, Buxton and Clarkson. However, the Government recognized the need for suitable memorials to the millions of victims of the slave trade themselves. There are a number of initiatives under way to remedy this situation. For example, the restored Thomas Fowell Buxton Memorial, erected to commemorate the emancipation of slaves following the 1833 Slavery Abolition Act, was reopened by the former Deputy Prime Minister on 27 March 2007. The United Kingdom has also pledged £20,000 to the CARICOM fund for a permanent United Nations memorial to the victims of the slave trade.

B. Regretting or expressing remorse or presenting apologies

7. The clear position of the Government of the United Kingdom is that slavery was and is abhorrent. Wherever, whenever and in whatever form slavery occurs, the Government unreservedly condemns it and is committed to eliminating it. On 27 November 2006, the Prime Minister made a statement expressing his deep sorrow that the trade ever happened and noting that the transatlantic slave trade stands as one of the most inhuman enterprises in history.

C. Restoring the dignity of the victims

8. Restoring the dignity of the victims of the slave trade and their memory is very important to the Government of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom sees this being taken forward both through measures to commemorate the victims themselves, and more forward-looking work to tackle the legacy of the slave trade, and to combat the pernicious practices of modern day slavery. Accordingly, the measures outlined under sections A, B and D together comprise the efforts of the Government to restore the dignity of the victims of the slave trade.

D. Taking appropriate and effective measures to halt and reverse the lasting consequences of slavery

Increasing race equality

9. Improving opportunity and strengthening society is the Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion. It brings together practical measures across the Government to improve opportunities for all in Britain, helping to ensure that a person's ethnicity or race is not a barrier to their success. It signals the Government's intention to give greater emphasis to the importance of helping people from different backgrounds come together, supporting people who contribute to society and taking a stand against racists and extremists.

Race relations legislation

10. The Government deplores all religious and racially motivated incidents, and its response to them is robust. The police, local authorities and community organizations are working closely together to ensure the safety and security of the United Kingdom communities. The first race relations legislation was enacted in 1965. The Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968 were replaced by stronger legislation in 1976. The 1976 Act was further strengthened by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Commission for Racial Equality was set up under the 1976 Race Relations Act.

Community cohesion

11. The Commission on integration and cohesion, a fixed-term advisory body, was announced on 28 June 2006. The Commission will consider how local areas can make the most of the benefits delivered by increased immigration and diversity, but will also consider how they can respond to the tensions that can sometimes arise. It will develop practical approaches that build communities' own capacity to prevent problems, including those caused by segregation and the dissemination of extremist ideologies. The Government also has a number of strategies to help refugees integrate into their local community. In March 2005 the Government published two relevant strategies on the themes "Integration matters" and "Working to rebuild lives", a strategy for improving refugee employment.

Race hate crime

12. Work continues across the Government to tackle race hate crime. The United Kingdom aims to successfully deliver the recommendations of the report entitled "Race for justice" (to improve the handling, investigation and prosecution of racist and religious crime), so that community confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to successfully tackle hate crime is increased. Specifically, the United Kingdom aims to establish a holistic approach across the criminal justice system to ensure that all cases are correctly identified; appropriately handled; thoroughly investigated; and effectively prosecuted.

Slave trade in the national curriculum

13. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's new draft secondary curriculum includes the slave trade as a compulsory element of history for the first time. Studying the nature and effects of the slave trade and its abolition will help pupils to understand the make-up of the United Kingdom today and put immigration, the Commonwealth and the legacy of the Empire into a clear historical context.

Supporting the teaching of black and minority ethnic history in schools

14. By 2008, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education and Skills will have provided nearly £910,000 for the development of the Understanding Slavery Initiative. This is a joint initiative between the National Maritime Museum, museums in Hull and Bristol and National Museums Liverpool. It has developed high-quality teaching materials for use in museums and classrooms at Key Stage 3-4 (ages 11-16) through the history and citizenship curriculum and training for teachers in how to approach the issue.

National schools competition — "The Big Conversation 2007"

15. "The Big Conversation 2007" is an inspiring and engaging opportunity for young people aged 11 to 14 to explore the complex issues surrounding the slave trade. Through interesting and thought-provoking questions based around the citizenship curriculum, pupils will work collaboratively to produce a creative piece (e.g. written, audio, film) of research showing their understanding of the history and legacies of the slave trade. Entries will be judged by a panel of experts, and regional winners will be invited to take part in a young people's discussion in December 2007.

British Council Africa 2007 programme

16. The British Council (the Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides significant grant in aid to the British Council, although it is operationally independent) has designed a three-year, £3 million regional programme called Africa 2007. The programme has three themes: different lives, creative celebrations, and footprints. Each theme has a number of projects that bring together individuals and communities from Africa and the United Kingdom in new ways to generate fresh ideas and understandings, building sustainable partnerships that challenge old opinions of the relationship between Africa and the United Kingdom.

Tackling underachievement

17. The picture for black and minority ethnic groups in the United Kingdom is a mixed one. A combination of actions is being taken to close the gap between those who are achieving and those who are not. On the broader national policy level, the United Kingdom is working to ensure that mainstream education programmes deliver for all black and minority ethnic groups via the primary and secondary national strategies. The United Kingdom has also developed targeted programmes such as the minority ethnic achievement project, the gypsy traveller and roma project, and the black pupils' achievement programme to tackle underachievement among particular groups.

Racist bullying

18. The Government has made it clear that all forms of bullying, including those motivated by prejudice, should not be tolerated and must be punished. The Schools White Paper *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (published in October 2005), committed the United Kingdom to producing specialist guidance on prejudice-driven bullying since it is aware that schools find this a particular challenge to address.

Tackling labour market inequalities

19. The ethnic minority employment strategy aims to raise the ethnic minority employment rate and reduce the employment gap between the ethnic minority population and the population as a whole. This strategy includes a number of targeted initiatives, for example, the "Developing the cities strategy" to increase employment opportunities, including ethnic minority employment and reduce poverty and social exclusion.

Poverty and debt relief

20. The United Kingdom is a leading actor in the fight against poverty, which is at the root of most forms of slavery and forced labour today. The Department for International Development (DFID) supports long-term programmes to help tackle the underlying causes of poverty. DFID also responds to emergencies, both natural and man-made. The Government has doubled its aid budget since 1997, while 2005 saw a historic deal to cancel over $50 billion of multilateral debts owed by poor countries. The United Kingdom used its presidency of the Group of 8 and the European Union in 2005 to push for renewed global commitment to the United Nations eight Millennium Development Goals. The United Kingdom is committed to increasing its development budget to 0.7 per cent of gross national income by 2013, concentrating its resources on the poorest countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, and working more in countries with weak or failing Governments. The Government provided over £1 billion to support poverty reduction in Africa last year.

21. Education is a fundamental step in empowering people to escape poverty and exploitation. Last year, the Government pledged a £8.5 billion investment to support education in poor countries over the next 10 years. The DFID Global School Partnerships also promotes links between schools in the United Kingdom and schools in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America with funding of £7.5 million over three years.

Contemporary slavery

22. The United Kingdom works both bilaterally with States and multilaterally through international forums to tackle modern day slavery in all its forms. Recent developments domestically include the publication on 23 March 2007 of a United Kingdom action plan on human trafficking. The plan applies to all forms of human trafficking, including trafficking for forced labour and child trafficking. It sets out proposals for action in the four key areas of prevention: enforcement and prosecution and protection and assistance to adult victims and child trafficking.